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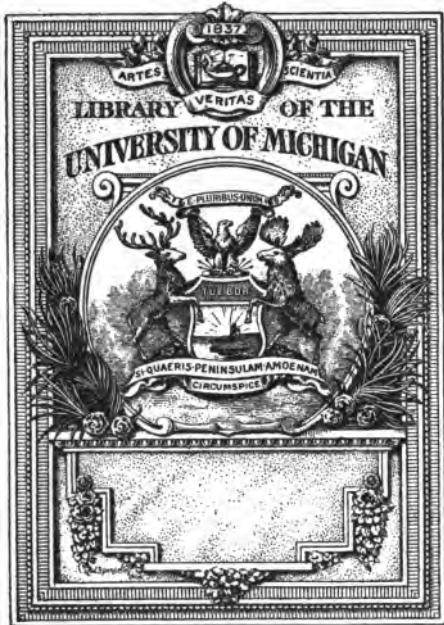
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Sprague

Curiosity. + An Ode.

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Pascal Falk.

Conductor, piano forte, and such
a violinist.

CURIOSITY.



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CURIOSITY

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A POEM,

DELIVERED AT CAMBRIDGE,

BEFORE THE

PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY,

AUGUST 27, 1829.

BY CHARLES SPRAGUE.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY J. T. BUCKINGHAM.

1829.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit:*

District Clerk's Office.

Be it remembered, that on the fourth day of September, A. D. 1829, in the fifty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, J. T. Buckingham, of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, *to wit:*

"Curiosity: A Poem, delivered at Cambridge, before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, August 27, 1829. By Charles Sprague."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;'" and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS,
Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

CAMBRIDGE :

E. W. METCALF AND COMPANY,
Printers to the University.

CURIOSITY.

It came from Heaven — its power archangels knew,
When this fair globe first rounded to their view ;
When the young sun revealed the glorious scene
Where oceans gathered and where lands grew green ;
When the dead dust in joyful myriads swarmed,
And man, the clod, with God's own breath was warmed :
It reigned in Eden — when that man first woke,
Its kindling influence from his eyeballs spoke ;
No roving childhood, no exploring youth
Led him along, till wonder chilled to truth ;
Full-formed at once, his subject world he trod,
And gazed upon the labours of his God ;
On all by turns his chartered glance was cast,
While each pleased best as each appeared the last ;
But when She came, in nature's blameless pride,
Bone of his bone, his heaven-anointed bride,
All meaner objects faded from his sight,
And sense turned giddy with the new delight ;
Those charmed his eye, but this entranced his soul,
Another self, queen-wonder of the whole !

Rapt at the view, in ecstacy he stood,
And, like his Maker, saw that all was good.

It reigned in Edén — in that heavy hour
When the arch-tempter sought our mother's bower,
Its thrilling charm her yielding heart assailed,
And even o'er dread Jehovah's word prevailed.
There the fair tree in fatal beauty grew,
And hung its mystic apples to her view :
“ Eat,” breathed the fiend, beneath his serpent guise,
“ Ye shall know all things, gather, and be wise ! ”
Sweet on her ear the wily falsehood stole,
And roused the Ruling Passion of her soul.
“ Ye shall become like God ” — transcendent fate !
That God's command forgot, she plucked and ate ;
Ate, and her partner lured to share the crime,
Whose wo, the legend saith, must live through time.
For this they shrank before the Avenger's face,
For this He drove them from the sacred place ;
For this came down the universal lot,
To weep, to wander, die, and be forgot.

It came from Heaven — it reigned in Edén's shades —
It roves on earth — and every walk invades :
Childhood and age alike its influence own,
It haunts the beggar's nook, the monarch's throne ;
Hangs o'er the cradle, leans above the bier,
Gazed on old Babel's tower — and lingers here.

To all that 's lofty, all that 's low it turns,
 With terror curdles and with rapture burns ;
 Now feels a seraph's throb, now, less than man's,
 A reptile tortures and a planet scans ;
 Now idly joins in life's poor, passing jars,
 Now shakes creation off, and soars beyond the stars.

"T is CURIOSITY — who hath not felt
 Its spirit, and before its altar knelt ?
 In the pleased infant see its power expand,
 When first the coral fills his little hand ;
 Throned in his mother's lap, it dries each tear,
 As her sweet legend falls upon his ear ;
 Next it assails him in his top's strange hum,
 Breathes in his whistle, echoes in his drum ;
 Each gilded toy, that doting love bestows,
 He longs to break and every spring expose.
 Placed by your hearth, with what delight he pores
 O'er the bright pages of his pictured stores ;
 How oft he steals upon your graver task,
 Of this to tell you and of that to ask ;
 And, when the waning hour to-bedward bids,
 Though gentle sleep sit waiting on his lids,
 How winningly he pleads to gain you o'er,
 That he may read one little story more.

Nor yet alone to toys and tales confined,
 It sits, dark brooding, o'er his embryo mind :
 Take him between your knees, peruse his face,

U or M

While all you know, or think you know, you trace ;
 Tell him who spoke creation into birth,
 Arched the broad heavens and spread the rolling earth,
 Who formed a pathway for the obedient sun,
 And bade the seasons in their circles run,
 Who filled the air, the forest, and the flood,
 And gave man all, for comfort, or for food ;
 Tell him they sprang at God's creating nod —
 He stops you short with, “ Father, who made God ? ”

Thus through life's stages may we mark the power
 That masters man in every changing hour.
 It tempts him from the blandishments of home,
 Mountains to climb and frozen seas to roam ;
 By air-blown bubbles buoyed it bids him rise,
 And hang, an atom in the vaulted skies ;
 Lured by its charm, he sits and learns to trace
 The midnight wanderings of the orbs of space ;
 Boldly he knocks at wisdom's inmost gate,
 With nature counsels and communes with fate ;
 Below, above, o'er all he dares to rove,
 In all finds God, and finds that God all love.

Turn to the world — its curious dwellers view,
 Like Paul's Athenians, seeking Something New.
 Be it a bonfire's or a city's blaze,
 The gibbet's victim, or the nation's gaze,
 A female atheist, or a learned dog,
 A monstrous pumpkin, or a mammoth hog,



A murder, or a muster, 't is the same,
 Life's follies, glories, griefs, all feed the flame.
 Hark, where the martial trumpet fills the air,
 How the roused multitude come round to stare ;
 Sport drops his ball, toil throws his hammer by,
 Thrift breaks a bargain off, to please his eye ;
 Up fly the windows, even fair mistress cook,
 Though dinner burn, must run to take a look.
 In the thronged court the ruling passion read,
 Where Story dooms, where Wirt and Webster plead ;
 Yet kindred minds alone their flights shall trace,
 The herd press on to see a cut-throat's face.
 Around the gallows' foot behold them draw,
 When the lost villain answers to the law ;
 Soft souls, how anxious on his pangs to gloat,
 When the vile cord shall tighten round his throat ;
 And ah ! each hard-bought stand to quit how grieved,
 As the sad rumour runs — “ The man 's reprieved ! ”
 See to the church the pious myriads pour,
 Squeeze through the aisles and jostle round the door ;
 Does Langdon preach ? (I veil his quiet name,
 Who serves his God and cannot stoop to fame ;)
 No, 't is some reverend mime, the latest rage,
 Who thumps the desk that should have trod the stage ;
 Cant's veriest ranter crams a house if new,
 When Paul himself, oft heard, would hardly fill a pew.

Lo, where the Stage, the poor, degraded Stage,
 Holds its warped mirror to a gaping age ;

U OF M

There, where to raise the drama's moral tone,
 Fool Harlequin usurps Apollo's throne ;
 There, where grown children gather round, to praise
 The new-vamped legends of their nursery days ;
 Where one loose scene shall turn more souls to shame,
 Than ten of Channing's lectures can reclaim ;
 There, where in idiot rapture we adore
 The herded vagabonds of every shore ;
 Women unsexed, who, lost to woman's pride,
 The drunkard's stagger ape, the bully's stride ;
 Pert lisping girls, who, still in childhood's fetters,
 Babble of love, yet barely know their letters ;
 Neat-jointed mummers, mocking nature's shape,
 To prove how nearly man can match an ape ;
 Vaulters, who, lightly served at home, perchance
 Had dangled from the rope on which they dance ;
 Dwarfs, mimics, jugglers, all that yield content,
 Where sin holds carnival and wit keeps lent ;
 Where, shoals on shoals, the modest million rush,
 One sex to laugh and one to try to blush,
 When mincing Ravenot sports tight pantalettes,
 And turns fops' heads while turning pirouettes ;
 There, at each ribald sally, where we hear
 The knowing giggle and the scurrile jeer,
 While from the intellectual gallery first
 Rolls the base plaudit, loudest at the worst.

Gods ! who can grace yon desecrated dome,
 When he may turn his Shakspeare o'er at home ?



Who there can group the pure ones of his race,
 To see and hear what bids him veil his face ?
 Ask ye who can ? why I, and you, and you ;
 No matter what the nonsense, if 't is new.
 To Doctor Logic's wit our sons give ear,
 They have no time for Hamlet, or for Lear ;
 Our daughters turn from gentle Juliet's wo,
 To count the twirls of Almaviva's toe.

Not theirs the blame who furnish forth the treat,
 But ours, who throng the board and grossly eat :
 We laud, indeed, the virtue-kindling Stage,
 And prate of Shakspeare and his deathless page ;
 But go, announce his best, on Cooper call,
 Cooper, " the noblest Roman of them all ;"
 Where are the crowds so wont to choke the door ?
 'T is an old thing, they 've seen it all before.

Pray Heaven, if yet indeed the Stage must stand,
 With guiltless mirth it may delight the land ;
 Far better else each scenic temple fall,
 And one approving silence curtain all.
 Despots to shame may yield their rising youth,
 But freedom dwells with purity and truth ;
 Then make the effort, ye who rule the Stage,
 With novel decency surprise the age ;
 Even wit, so long forgot, may play its part,
 And nature yet have power to melt the heart ;



Perchance the listeners, to their instinct true,
May fancy common sense — 't were surely Something New.

Turn to the Press — its teeming sheets survey,
Big with the wonders of each passing day ;
Births, deaths, and weddings, forgeries, fires, and wrecks,
Harangues and hail-storms, brawls and broken necks ;
Where half-fledged bards on feeble pinions seek
An immortality of near a week ;
Where cruel eulogists the dead restore,
In maudlin praise to martyr them once more ;
Where ruffian slanderers wreak their coward spite,
And need no venom'd dagger while they write :
There, (with a quill, so noisy and so vain,
We almost hear the goose it clothed complain,) .
Where each hack scribe, as hate or interest burns,
Toad or toad-eater, stains the page by turns ;
Enacts virtú, usurps the critic's chair,
Lauds a mock Guido, or a mouthing player ;
Viceroy's it o'er the realms of prose and rhyme,
Now puffs pert "Pelham," now "The Course of Time ;"
And though ere Christmas both may be forgot,
Vows this beats Milton, and that Walter Scott :
With Samson's vigour feels his nerves expand,
To overthrow the nobles of the land ;
Soils the green garlands that for Otis bloom,
And plants a brier even on Cabot's tomb ;
As turn the party coppers, heads or tails,
And now this faction and now that prevails,

M. W. U.

Applauds to-day what yesterday he cursed,
 Lampoons the wisest and extols the worst ;
 While hard to tell, so coarse a daub he lays,
 Which sullies most, the slander or the praise.

Yet, sweet or bitter, hence what fountains burst,
 While still the more we drink the more we thirst :
 Trade hardly deems the busy day begun,
 Till his keen eye along the page has run ;
 The blooming daughter throws her needle by,
 And reads her schoolmate's marriage with a sigh ;
 While the grave mother puts her glasses on,
 And gives a tear to some old crony gone ;
 The preacher, too, his Sunday theme lays down,
 To know what last new folly fills the town :
 Lively or sad, life's meanest, mightiest things,
 The fate of fighting cocks, or fighting kings ;
 Nought comes amiss, we take the nauseous stuff,
 Verjuice or oil, a libel or a puff.

'T is this sustains that coarse, licentious tribe
 Of tenth-rate typemen, gaping for a bribe ;
 That reptile race, with all that 's good at strife,
 Who trail their slime through every walk of life ;
 Stain the white tablet where a great man's name
 Stands proudly chiselled by the hand of fame,
 Nor round the sacred fireside fear to crawl,
 But drop their venom there, and poison all.

"T is Curiosity — though in its round,
 Not one poor dupe the calumny has found,
 Still shall it live, and still new slanders breed ;
 What though we ne'er believe, we buy and read :
 Like Scotland's war-cross, thrown from hand to hand,
 To rouse the angry passions of the land,
 So the black falsehood flies from ear to ear,
 While goodness grieves, but, grieving, still must hear.

All are not such ? O no, there are, thank Heaven,
 A nobler troop to whom this trust is given ;
 Who, all unbribed, on freedom's ramparts stand,
 Faithful and firm, bright warders of the land.
 By them still lifts the Press its arm abroad,
 To guide all-curious man along life's road ;
 To cheer young genius, pity's tear to start,
 In truth's bold cause to rouse each fearless heart ;
 O'er male and female quacks to shake the rod,
 And scourge the unsexed thing that scorns her God ;
 To hunt corruption from his secret den,
 And show the monster up, the gaze of wondering men.

How swells my theme ! how vain my power I find,
 To track the windings of the curious mind ;
 Let aught be hid, though useless, nothing boots,
 Straightway it must be plucked up by the roots.
 How oft we lay the volume down to ask
 Of him, the victim in the Iron Mask ;
 The crusted medal rub with painful care,

M 40 U

To spell the legend out — that is not there ;
 With dubious gaze o'er mossgrown tombstones bend,
 To find a name — the herald never penned ;
 Dig through the lava-deluged city's breast,
 Learn all we can, and wisely guess the rest :
 Ancient or modern, sacred or profane,
 All must be known and all obscure made plain ;
 If 't was a pippin tempted Eve to sin,
 If glorious Byron drugged his muse with gin ;
 If Troy e'er stood, if Shakspeare stole a deer,
 If Israel's missing tribes found refuge here ;
 If like a villain Captain Henry lied,
 If like a martyr Captain Morgan died.

Its aim oft idle, lovely in its end,
 We turn to look, then linger to befriend ;
 The maid of Egypt thus was led to save
 A nation's future leader from the wave :
 New things to hear when erst the Gentiles ran,
 Truth closed what Curiosity began :
 How many a noble art, now widely known,
 Owes its young impulse to this power alone :
 Even in its slightest working we may trace
 A deed that changed the fortunes of a race ;
 Bruce, banned and hunted on his native soil,
 With curious eye surveyed a spider's toil ;
 Six times the little climber strove and failed ;
 Six times the chief before his foes had quailed ;
 "Once more," he cried, "in thine my doom I read,

Once more I dare the fight, if thou succeed ; ”
 ’T was done — the insect’s fate he made his own,
 Once more the battle waged, and gained a throne.

Behold the sick man in his easy chair ;
 Barred from the busy crowd and bracing air,
 How every passing trifle proves its power
 To while away the long, dull, lazy hour.
 As down the pane the rival rain-drops chase,
 Curious he ’ll watch to see which wins the race ;
 And let two dogs beneath his window fight,
 He ’ll shut his Bible to enjoy the sight.
 So with each newborn nothing rolls the day,
 Till some kind neighbour, stumbling in his way,
 Draws up his chair the sufferer to amuse,
 And makes him happy while he tells — The News.

The News ! our morning, noon, and evening cry ;
 Day unto day repeats it till we die.
 For this the cit, the critic, and the fop
 Dally the hour away in Tonsor’s shop ;
 For this the gossip takes her daily route,
 And wears your threshold and your patience out ;
 For this we leave the parson in the lurch,
 And pause to prattle on the way to church ;
 Even when some coffined friend we gather round,
 We ask, “ What news ? ” then lay him in the ground ;
 To this the breakfast owes its sweetest zest,
 For this the dinner cools, the bed remains unpressed.

What gives each tale of scandal to the street,
 The kitchen's wonder and the parlour's treat ?
 See the pert housemaid to the keyhole fly,
 When husband storms, wife frets, or lovers sigh ;
 See Tom your pockets ransack for each note,
 And read your secrets while he cleans your coat ;
 See, yes, to listen see even Madam deign,
 When the smug sempstress pours her ready strain.
 This wings the lie that malice breeds in fear,
 No tongue so vile but finds a kindred ear ;
 Swift flies each tale of laughter, shame, or folly,
 Caught by Paul Pry and carried home to Polly ;
 On this each foul calumniator leans,
 And nods and hints the villainy he means ;
 Full well he knows what latent wildfire lies
 In the close whisper and the dark surmise ;
 A muffled word, a wordless wink has woken
 A warmer throb than if a Dexter spoke ;
 And he, o'er Everett's periods who would nod,
 To track a secret half the town has trod.

O Thou, from whose rank breath nor sex can save,
 Nor sacred virtue, nor the powerless grave,
 Felon unwhipped ! than whom in yonder cells,
 Full many a groaning wretch less guilty dwells,
 Blush — if of honest blood a drop remains,
 To steal its lonely way along thy veins ;
 Blush — if the bronze, long hardened on thy cheek,
 Has left a spot where that poor drop can speak ;

Blush to be branded with the Slanderer's name,
 And though thou dread'st not sin, at least dread shame.
 We hear indeed, but shudder while we hear
 The insidious falsehood and the heartless jeer ;
 For each dark libel that thou lick'st to shape,
 Thou may'st from law, but not from scorn escape ;
 The pointed finger, cold, averted eye,
 Insulted virtue's hiss — thou canst not fly.

The churl, who holds it heresy to *think*,
 Who loves no music but the dollar's clink,
 Who laughs to scorn the wisdom of the schools,
 And deems the first of poets first of fools,
 Who never found what good from science grew,
 Save the grand truth, that one and one are two,
 And marvels Bowditch o'er a book should pore,
 Unless to make those two turn into four ;
 Who, placed where Catskill's forehead greets the sky,
 Grieves that such quarries all unhewn should lie ;
 Or, gazing where Niagara's torrents thrill,
 Exclaims, "A monstrous stream — to turn a mill ;"
 Who loves to feel the blessed winds of heaven,
 But as his freighted barks are portward driven ;
 Even he, across whose brain scarce dares to creep
 Aught but thrift's parent pair — to get, to keep ;
 Who never learned life's real bliss to know —
 With Curiosity even he can glow.

Go, seek him out on yon dear Gotham's walk,
 Where traffic's venturers meet to trade and talk ;
 Where Mammon's votaries bend, of each degree,
 The hard-eyed lender, and the pale lendee ;
 Where rogues insolvent strut in whitewashed pride,
 And shove the dupes who trusted them aside.
 How through the buzzing crowd he threads his way,
 To catch the flying rumours of the day ;
 To learn of changing stocks, of bargains crossed,
 Of breaking merchants, and of cargoes lost ;
 The thousand ills that traffic's walks invade,
 And give the heart-ach to the sons of trade.
 How cold he hearkens to some bankrupt's wo,
 Nods his wise head, and cries — “ I told you so ;
 “ The thriftless fellow lived beyond his means,
 “ He must buy brants — I make my folks eat beans ; ”
 What cares he for the knave, the knave's sad wife,
 The blighted prospects of an anxious life ?
 The kindly throbs that other men control,
 Ne'er melt the iron of the miser's soul ;
 Through life's dark road his sordid way he wends,
 An incarnation of fat dividends ;
 But when to death he sinks, ungrieved, unsung,
 Buoyed by the blessing of no mortal tongue ;
 No worth rewarded and no want redressed,
 To scatter fragrance round his place of rest,
 What shall that hallowed epitaph supply —
 The universal wo when good men die ?
 Cold Curiosity shall linger there,

To guess the wealth he leaves his tearless heir ;
 Perchance to wonder what must be his doom,
 In the far land that lies beyond the tomb ;—
 Alas ! for him, if, in its awful plan,
 Heaven deal with him as he hath dealt with man.

Child of romance, these work-day scenes you spurn,
 For loftier things your finer pulses burn ;
 Through nature's walks your curious way you take,
 Gaze on her glowing bow, her glittering flake,
 Her spring's first cheerful green, her autumn's last,
 Born in the breeze, or dying in the blast ;
 You climb the mountain's everlasting wall,
 You linger where the thunder-waters fall,
 You love to wander by old ocean's side,
 And hold communion with its sullen tide ;
 Washed to your foot some fragment of a wreck,
 Fancy shall build again the crowded deck
 That trod the waves, till mid the tempest's frown,
 The sepulchre of living men went down.
 Yet fancy, with her milder, tenderer glow,
 But dreams what Curiosity would know ;
 Ye would stand listening, as the booming gun
 Proclaimed the work of agony half done ;
 There would ye drink each drowning seaman's cry,
 As wild to Heaven he cast his frantic eye ;
 Though vain all aid, though pity's blood ran cold,
 The mortal havoc ye would dare behold ;
 Still Curiosity would wait and weep,
 Till all sank down to slumber in the deep.

Nor yet appeased the spirit's restless glow,
 Ye would explore the gloomy waste below ;
 There, where the joyful sunbeams never fell,
 Where ocean's unrecorded monsters dwell ;
 Where sleep earth's precious things, her rifled gold,
 Bones bleached by ages, bodies hardly cold,
 Of those who bowed to fate in every form ;
 By battle strife, by pirate, or by storm ;
 The sailor chief, who freedom's foes defied,
 Wrapped in the sacred flag for which he died ;
 The wretch, thrown over to the midnight foam,
 Stabbed in his blessed dreams of love and home ;
 The mother, with her fleshless arms still clasped
 Round the scared infant that in death she grasped ; —
 On these, and sights like these, ye long to gaze,
 The mournful trophies of uncounted days ;
 All that the miser deep has brooded o'er,
 Since its first billow rolled to find a shore.

Once more the Press — not that which daily flings
 Its fleeting ray across life's fleeting things —
 See tomes on tomes of fancy and of power,
 To cheer man's heaviest, warm his holiest hour.
 Now fiction's groves we tread, where young romance
 Laps the glad senses in her sweetest trance ;
 Now through earth's cold, unpeopled realms we range,
 And mark each rolling century's awful change ;
 Turn back the tide of ages to its head,
 And hoard the wisdom of the honored dead.

'T was heaven to lounge upon a couch, said Gray,
 And read new novels through a rainy day :
 Add but the Spanish weed, the bard was right ;
 'T is heaven, the upper heaven of calm delight ;
 The world forgot, to sit at ease reclined,
 While round one's head the smoky perfumes wind,
 Firm in one hand the ivory folder grasped,
 Scott's uncut latest by the other clasped,
 'T is heaven, the glowing, graphic page to turn,
 And feel within the ruling passion burn ;
 Now through the dingles of his own bleak isle,
 And now through lands that wear a sunnier smile,
 To follow him, that all-creative One,
 Who never found a "brother near his throne."

Look now, directed by yon candle's blaze,
 Where the false shutter half its trust betrays —
 Mark that fair girl, reclining in her bed,
 Its curtain round her polished shoulders spread :
 Dark midnight reigns, the storm is up in power ; .
 What keeps her waking in that dreary hour ?
 See where the volume on her pillow lies —
 Claims Radcliffe or Chapone those frequent sighs ?
 'T is some wild legend — now her kind eye fills,
 And now cold terror every fibre chills ;
 Still she reads on — in fiction's labyrinth lost,
 Of tyrant fathers, and of true love crossed ;
 Of clanking fetters, low, mysterious groans, .
 Blood-crusted daggers, and uncoffined bones,

Pale, gliding ghosts, with fingers dropping gore,
 And blue flames dancing round a dungeon door ;—
 Still she reads on — even though to read she fears,
 And in each keyhole moan strange voices hears,
 While every shadow that withdraws her look,
 Glares in her face, the goblin of her book ;
 Still o'er the leaves her craving eye is cast,
 On all she feasts, yet hungers for the last ;
 Counts what remain, now sighs there are no more,
 And now even those half tempted to skip o'er ;
 At length, the bad all killed, the good all pleased,
 Her thirsting Curiosity appeased,
 She shuts the dear, dear book, that made her weep,
 Puts out her light, and turns away to sleep.

Her bright, her bloody records to unroll,
 See history come, and wake the inquiring soul :
 How bounds the bosom at each wondrous deed
 Of those who founded, and of those who freed ;
 The good, the valiant of our own loved clime,
 Whose names shall brighten through the clouds of time.
 How rapt we linger o'er the volumed lore
 That tracks the glories of each distant shore ;
 In all their grandeur and in all their gloom,
 The throned, the thralled, rise dimly from the tomb ;
 Chiefs, sages, bards, the giants of their race,
 Earth's monarch men, her greatness and her grace ;
 Warmed as we read, the penman's page we spurn,
 And to each near, each far arena turn ;

Here, where the Pilgrim's altar first was built,
 Here, where the patriot's life-blood first was spilt ;
 There, where new empires spread along each spot
 Where old ones flourished, but to be forgot,
 Or, direr judgement, spared to fill a page,
 And with their errors warn an after age.

And where is he, upon that Rock can stand,
 Nor with their firmness feel his heart expand,
 Who a new empire planted where they trod,
 And gave it to their children and their God ?
 Who yon immortal mountain-shrine hath pressed,
 With saintlier relics stored than priest e'er blessed,
 But felt each grateful pulse more warmly glow,
 In voiceless reverence for the dead below ?
 Who, too, by Curiosity led on,
 To tread the shores of kingdoms come and gone,
 Where faith her martyrs to the fagot led,
 Where freedom's champions on the scaffold bled,
 Where ancient power, though stripped of ancient fame,
 Curbed, but not crushed, still lives for guilt and shame,
 But prouder, happier, turns on home to gaze,
 And thanks his God who gave him better days ?

Undraw yon curtain, look within that room,
 Where all is splendour, yet where all is gloom :
 Why weeps that mother ? why, in pensive mood,
 Group noiseless round, that little, lovely brood ?
 The battledoor is still, laid by each book,

And the harp slumbers in its customed nook.
Who hath done this? what cold, unpitying foe
Hath made this house the dwelling-place of wo?
'T is he, the husband, father, lost in care,
O'er that sweet fellow in his cradle there:
The gallant bark that rides by yonder strand,
Bears him to-morrow from his native land.
Why turns he, half unwilling, from his home,
To tempt the ocean and the earth to roam?
Wealth he can boast, a miser's sigh would hush,
And health is laughing in that ruddy blush;
Friends spring to greet him, and he has no foe—
So honoured and so blessed, what bids him go?—
His eye must see, his foot each spot must tread,
Where sleeps the dust of earth's recorded dead;
Where rise the monuments of ancient time,
Pillar and pyramid in age sublime;
The pagan's temple and the churchman's tower,
War's bloodiest plain and wisdom's greenest bower;
All that his wonder woke in school-boy themes,
All that his fancy fired in youthful dreams:
Where Socrates once taught he thirsts to stray,
Where Homer poured his everlasting lay;
From Virgil's tomb he longs to pluck one flower,
By Avon's stream to live one moonlight hour;
To pause where England "garners up" her great,
And drop a patriot's tear to Milton's fate;
Fame's living masters, too, he must behold,
Whose deeds shall blazon with the best of old;

Nations compare, their laws and customs scan,
 And read, wherever spread, the book of man ;—
 For these he goes, self-banished from his hearth,
 And wrings the hearts of all he loves on earth.

Yet say, shall not new joy those hearts inspire,
 When grouping round the future winter fire,
 To hear the wonders of the world they burn,
 And lose his absence in his glad return ?—
 Return ? alas ! he shall return no more,
 To bless his own sweet home, his own proud shore.
 Look once again — cold in his cabin now,
 Death's finger-mark is on his pallid brow ;
 No wife stood by, her patient watch to keep,
 To smile on him, then turn away to weep ;
 Kind woman's place rough mariners supplied,
 And shared the wanderer's blessing when he died.
 Wrapped in the raiment that it long must wear,
 His body to the deck they slowly bear ;
 Even there the spirit that I sing is true,
 The crew look on with sad, but curious view ;
 The setting sun flings round his farewell rays,
 O'er the broad ocean not a ripple plays ;
 How eloquent, how awful in its power,
 The silent lecture of death's sabbath-hour ;
 One voice that silence breaks — the prayer is said,
 And the last rite man pays to man is paid ;
 The plashing waters mark his resting-place,
 And fold him round in one long, cold embrace ;

Bright bubbles for a moment sparkle o'er,
 Then break, to be, like him, beheld no more ;
 Down, countless fathoms down, he sinks to sleep,
 With all the nameless shapes that haunt the deep.

“ Alps rise on Alps ” — in vain my muse essays
 To lay the spirit that she dared to raise :
 What spreading scenes of rapture and of wo,
 With rose and cypress lure me as I go.
 In every question and in every glance,
 In folly’s wonder and in wisdom’s trance,
 In all of life, nor yet of life alone,
 In all beyond, this mighty power we own.
 We would unclasp the mystic book of fate,
 And trace the paths of all we love and hate ;
 The father’s heart would learn his children’s doom,
 Even when that heart is crumbling in the tomb ;
 If they must sink in guilt, or soar to fame,
 And leave a hated, or a hallowed name ;
 By hope elated, or depressed by doubt,
 Even in the death-pang he would find it out.

What boots it to your dust, your son were born
 An empire’s idol or a rabble’s scorn ?
 Think ye the franchised spirit shall return,
 To share his triumph, his disgrace to mourn ?
 Ah ! Curiosity, by thee inspired,
 This truth to know how oft has man inquired !

And is it fancy all ? can reason say
 Earth's loves must moulder with earth's mouldering clay ?
 That death can chill the father's sacred glow,
 And hush the throb that none but mothers know ?
 Must we believe those tones of dear delight,
 The morning welcome and the sweet good-night,
 The kind monition and the well-earned praise,
 That won and warmed us in our earlier days,
 Turned, as they fell, to cold and common air ? —
 Speak, proud philosophy, the truth declare.

Yet no, the fond delusion, if no more,
 We would not yield for wisdom's cheerless lore ;
 A tender creed they hold, who dare believe
 The dead return, with them to joy or grieve.
 How sweet, while lingering slow on shore or hill,
 When all the pleasant sounds of earth are still,
 When the round moon rolls through the unpillared skies,
 And stars look down as they were angels' eyes,
 How sweet to deem our lost, adored ones nigh,
 And hear their voices in the night-wind's sigh.
 Full many an idle dream that hope had broke,
 And the awed heart to holy goodness woke ;
 Full many a felon's guilt in thought had died,
 Feared he his father's spirit by his side ; —
 Then let that fear, that hope control the mind,
 Still let us question, still no answer find ;
 Let Curiosity of Heaven inquire,
 Nor earth's cold dogmas quench the ethereal fire.

Nor even to life, nor death, nor time confined —
 The dread hereafter fills the exploring mind ;
 We burst the grave, profane the coffin's lid,
 Unwisely ask of all so wisely hid ;
 Eternity's dark record we would read,
 Mysteries, unravelled yet by mortal creed ;
 Of life to come, unending joy and wo,
 And all that holy wranglers dream below ;
 To find their jarring dogmas out we long,
 Or which is right, or whether all be wrong ;
 Things of an hour, we would invade His throne,
 And find out Him, the Everlasting One !
 Faith we may boast, undarkened by a doubt,
 We thirst to find each awful secret out ;
 Hope may sustain, and innocence impart
 Her sweet specific to the fearless heart,
 The inquiring spirit will not be controlled,
 We would make certain all, and all behold.

Unfathomed well-head of the boundless soul !
 Whose living waters lure us as they roll,
 From thy pure wave one cheering hope we draw —
 Man, man, at least, shall spurn proud nature's law.
 All that have breath, but he, lie down content,
 Life's purpose served, indeed, when life is spent ;
 All as in Paradise the same are found ;
 The beast, whose footstep shakes the solid ground,
 The insect, living on a summer spire,
 The bird, whose pinion courts the sunbeam's fire ;

In lair and nest, in way and want, the same
 As when their sires sought Adam for a name :
 Their be-all and their end-all here below,
 They nothing need beyond, nor need to know ;
 Earth and her hoards their every want supply,
 They revel, rest, then fearless, hopeless die.
 But Man, his Maker's likeness, lord of earth,
 Who owes to nature little but his birth,
 Shakes down her puny chains, her wants, and woes.
 One world subdues, and for another glows.
 See him, the feeblest, in his cradle laid ;
 See him, the mightiest, in his mind arrayed !
 How wide the gulf he clears, how bold the flight
 That bears him upward to the realms of light !
 By restless Curiosity inspired,
 Through all his subject world he roves untired ;
 Looks back and scans the infant days of yore,
 On to the time when time shall be no more ;
 Even in life's parting throb its spirit burns,
 And shut from earth to heaven more warmly turns.

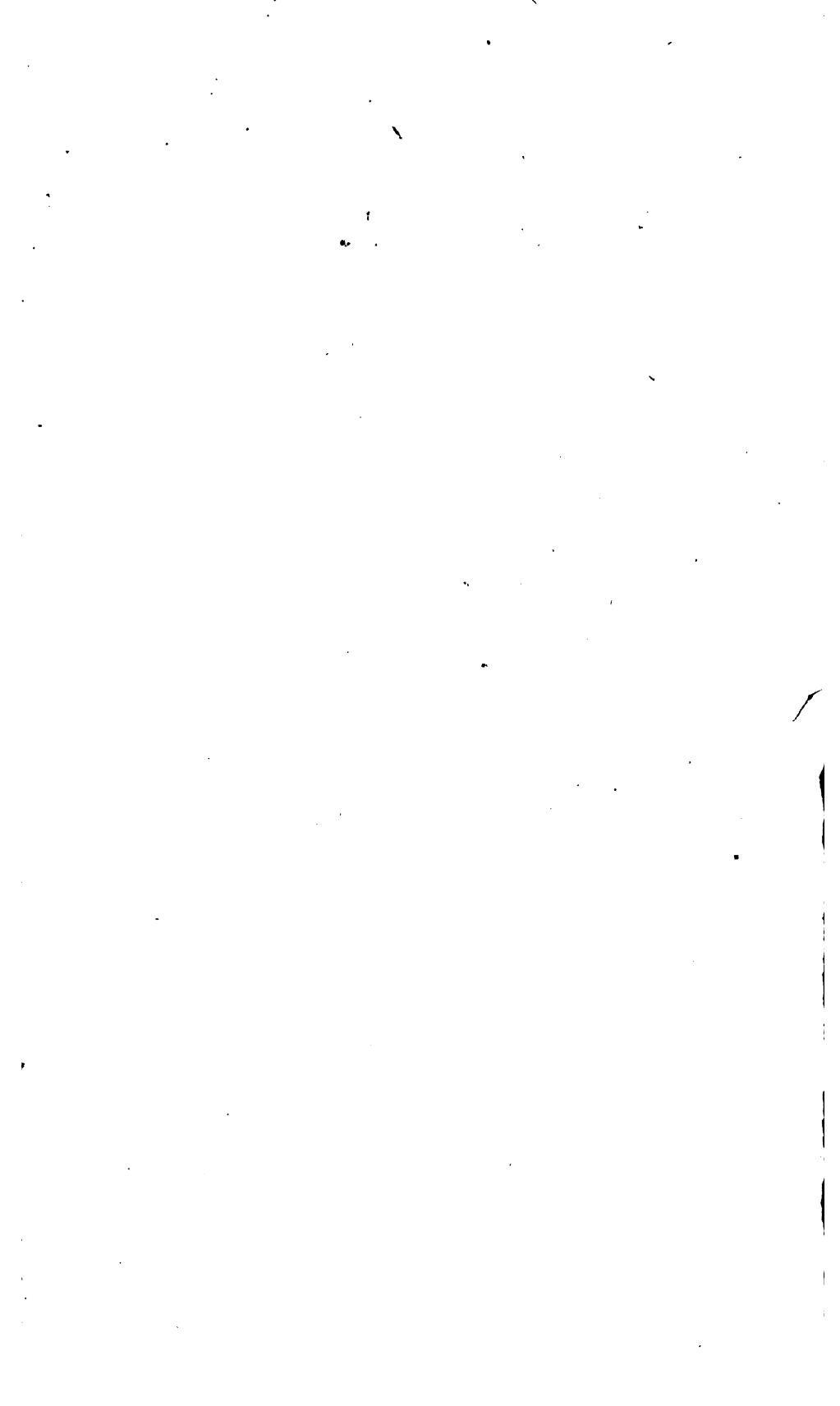
Shall he alone, of mortal dwellers here,
 Thus soar aloft, to sink in mid-career ?
 Less favoured than a worm, shall his stern doom
 Lock up these seraph longings in the tomb ?—
 O Thou, whose fingers raised us from the dust,
 Till there we sleep again, be this our trust :
 This sacred hunger marks the immortal mind,
 By Thee t'was given, for Thee, for Heaven designed ;

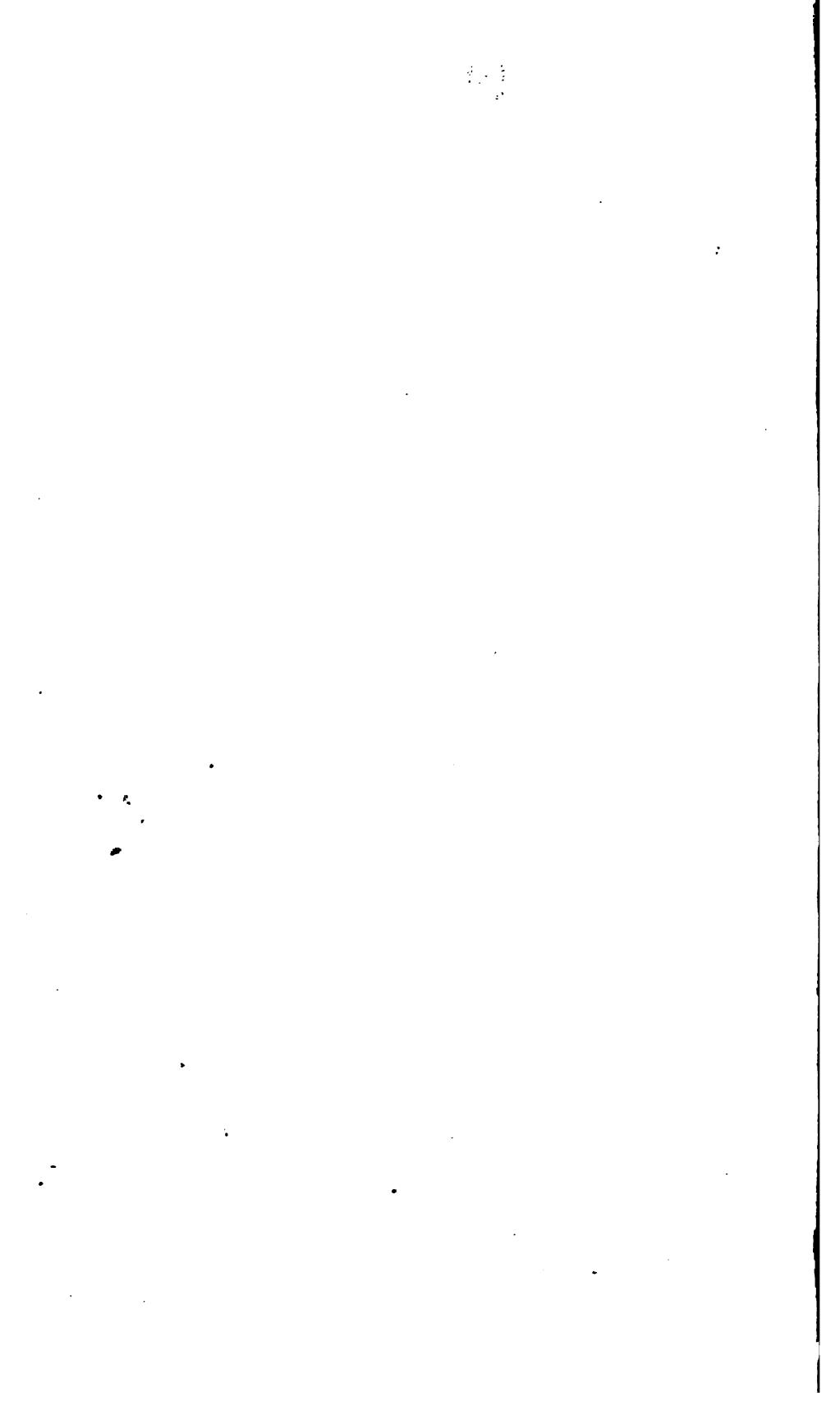
There the rapt spirit, from earth's grossness freed,
Shall see, and know, and be like Thee indeed.

Here let me pause — no further I rehearse
What claims a loftier soul, a nobler verse ;
The mountain's foot I have but loitered round,
Nor dared to scale its highest, holiest ground ;
But ventured on the pebbly shore to stray,
While the broad ocean all before me lay ;—
How bright the boundless prospect there on high ;
How rich the pearls that here all hidden lie ;
But not for me — to life's coarse service sold,
Where thought lies barren and nought breeds but gold —
'T is yours, ye favoured ones, at whose command,
From the cold world I ventured, here to stand :
Ye who were lapped in wisdom's murmuring bowers,
Who still to bright improvement yield your hours ;
To you the privilege and the power belong,
To give my theme the grace of living song ;
Yours be the flapping of the eagle's wing,
To dare the loftiest crag and heavenward spring ;
Mine the light task to hop from spray to spray,
Blessed if I charm one summer hour away.

One summer hour — its golden sands have run,
And the poor labour of the bard is done —
Yet, ere I fling aside my humble lyre,
Let one fond wish its trembling strings inspire ;

Fancy the task to Feeling shall resign,
And the heart prompt the warm, untutored line.
Peace to this ancient spot ! here, as of old,
May learning dwell and all her stores unfold ;
Still may her priests around these altars stand,
And train to truth the children of the land ;
Bright be their paths, within these shades who rest,
These brother-bands — beneath His guidance blessed
Who with their fathers here turned wisdom's page,
Who comes to them the Statesman and the Sage.—
Praise be his portion in his labours here,
The praise that cheered a Kirkland's mild career ;
The love that finds in every breast a shrine,
When zeal and gentleness with wisdom join.
Here may he sit, while race succeeding race
Go proudly forth his parent care to grace ;
In head and heart by him prepared to rise,
To take their stations with the good and wise :
This crowning recompense to him be given,
To see them guard on earth and guide to heaven ;
Thus in their talents, in their virtues blessed,
O be his ripest years his happiest and his best.





5

John P. Hardin.

71
42

MR. SPRAGUE'S
CENTENNIAL ODE.



From the "Burnham Book Store"
Oct. 95-
35-

AN

ODE:

PRONOUNCED BEFORE THE

INHABITANTS OF BOSTON,

SEPTEMBER THE SEVENTEENTH, 1830,

AT THE

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

SETTLEMENT OF THE CITY.

BY CHARLES SPRAGUE.

BOSTON :

JOHN H. EASTBURN....CITY PRINTER.

MDCCXXX.

III.

Behold ! they come—those sainted forms,
 Unshaken through the strife of storms ;
 Heaven's winter cloud hangs coldly down,
 And earth puts on its rudest frown ;
 But colder, ruder was the hand,
 That drove them from their own fair land ;
 Their own fair land—refinement's chosen seat,
 Art's trophied dwelling, learning's green retreat ;
 By valour guarded, and by victory crowned,
 For all, but gentle charity, renowned.

With streaming eye, yet steadfast heart,
 Even from that land they dared to part,
 And burst each tender tie ;
 Haunts, where their sunny youth was passed,
 Homes, where they fondly hoped at last
 In peaceful age to die ;
 Friends, kindred, comfort, all they spurned—
 Their fathers' hallowed graves ;
 And to a world of darkness turned,
 Beyond a world of waves.

IV.

When Israel's race from bondage fled,
 Signs from on high the wanderers led ;
 But here—Heaven hung no symbol here,
Their steps to guide, *their* souls to cheer ;
 They saw, thro' sorrow's lengthening night,
 Nought but the fagot's guilty light ;

The cloud they gazed at was the smoke,
 That round their murdered brethren broke.
 Nor power above, nor power below,
 Sustained them in their hour of wo ;
 A fearful path they trod,
 And dared a fearful doom ;
 To build an altar to their God,
 And find a quiet tomb.

V.

But not alone, not all unblessed,
 The exile sought a place of rest ;
 ONE dared with him to burst the knot,
 That bound her to her native spot ;
 Her low sweet voice in comfort spoke,
 As round their bark the billows broke ;
 She through the midnight watch was there ;
 With him to bend her knees in prayer ;
 She trod the shore with girded heart,
 Through good and ill to claim her part ;
 In life, in death, with him to seal
 Her kindred love, her kindred zeal.

VI.

They come—that coming who shall tell ?
 The eye may weep, the heart may swell,
 But the poor tongue in vain essays
 A fitting note for them to raise.
 We hear the after-shout that rings

For them who smote the power of kings ;
 The swelling triumph all would share,
 But who the dark defeat would dare,
 And boldly meet the wrath and wo,
 That wait the unsuccessful blow ?
 It were an envied fate, we deem,
 To live a land's recorded theme,
 When we are in the tomb ;
 We, too, might yield the joys of home,
 And waves of winter darkness roam,
 And tread a shore of gloom—
 Knew we those waves, through coming time,
 Should roll our names to every clime ;
 Felt we that millions on that shore
 Should stand, our memory to adore—
 But no glad vision burst in light,
 Upon the Pilgrims' aching sight ;
 Their hearts no proud hereafter swelled ;
 Deep shadows veiled the way they held ;
 The yell of vengeance was their trump of fame,
 Their monument, a grave without a name.

VII.

Yet, strong in weakness, there they stand,
 On yonder ice-bound rock,
 Stern and resolved, that faithful band,
 To meet fate's rudest shock.
 Though anguish rends the father's breast,
 For them, his dearest and his best,

With him the waste who trod—
 Though tears that freeze, the mother sheds
 Upon her children's houseless heads—
 The Christian turns to God !

VIII.

In grateful adoration now,
 Upon the barren sands they bow.
 What tongue of joy e'er woke such prayer,
 As bursts in desolation there ?
 What arm of strength e'er wrought such
 power,
 As waits to crown that feeble hour ?
 There into life an infant empire springs !
 There falls the iron from the soul ;
 There liberty's young accents roll,
 Up to the King of kings !
 To fair creation's farthest bound,
 That thrilling summons yet shall sound ;
 The dreaming nations shall awake,
 And to their centre earth's old kingdoms shake.
 Pontiff and prince, your sway
 Must crumble from that day ;
 Before the loftier throne of Heaven,
 The hand is raised, the pledge is given—
 One monarch to obey, one creed to own,
 That monarch, God, that creed, His word
 alone.

IX.

Spread out earth's holiest records here,
 Of days and deeds to reverence dear ;
 A zeal like this what pious legends tell ?
 On kingdoms built
 In blood and guilt,
 The worshippers of vulgar triumph dwell—
 But what exploit with theirs shall page,
 Who rose to bless their kind ;
 Who left their nation and their age,
 Man's spirit to unbind ?
 Who boundless seas passed o'er,
 And boldly met, in every path,
 Famine and frost and heathen wrath,
 To dedicate a shore,
 Where piety's meek train might breathe their vow,
 And seek their Maker with an unshamed brow ;
 Where liberty's glad race might proudly come,
 And set up there an everlasting home ?

X.

O many a time it hath been told,
 The story of those men of old :
 For this fair poetry hath wreathed
 Her sweetest, purest flower ;
 For this proud eloquence hath breathed
 His strain of loftiest power ;
 Devotion, too, hath lingered round
 Each spot of consecrated ground,

And hill and valley blessed ;
 There, where our banished Fathers strayed,
 There, where they loved and wept and prayed,
 There, where their ashes rest.

XI.

And never may they rest unsung,
 While liberty can find a tongue.
 Twine, Gratitude, a wreath for them,
 More deathless than the diadem,
 Who to life's noblest end,
 Gave up life's noblest powers,
 And bade the legacy descend,
 Down, down to us and ours.

XII.

By centuries now the glorious hour we mark,
 When to these shores they steered their shattered
 bark ;
 And still, as other centuries melt away,
 Shall other ages come to keep the day.
 When we are dust, who gather round this spot,
 Our joys, our griefs, our very names forgot,
 Here shall the dwellers of the land be seen,
 To keep the memory of the Pilgrims green.
 Nor here alone their praises shall go round,
 Nor here alone their virtues shall abound—
 Broad as the empire of the free shall spread,
 Far as the foot of man shall dare to tread,

Where oar hath never dipped, where human
tongue
Hath never through the woods of ages rung,
There, where the eagle's scream and wild wolf's
cry
Keep ceaseless day and night through earth and
sky,
Even there, in after time, as toil and taste
Go forth in gladness to redeem the waste,
Even there shall rise, as grateful myriads throng,
Faith's holy prayer and freedom's joyful song ;
There shall the flame that flashed from yonder
Rock,
Light up the land, till nature's final shock.

XIII.

Yet while by life's endearments crowned,
To mark this day we gather round,
And to our nation's founders raise
The voice of gratitude and praise,
Shall not one line lament that lion race,
For us struck out from sweet creation's face ?
Alas ! alas ! for them—those fated bands,
Whose monarch tread was on these broad, green
lands ;
Our Fathers called them savage—them, whose
bread,
In the dark hour, those famished Fathers fed :
We call them savage, we,
Who hail the struggling free,

Of every clime and hue ;
 We, who would save
 The branded slave,
 And give him liberty he never knew :
 We, who but now have caught the tale,
 That turns each listening tyrant pale,
 And blessed the winds and waves that bore
 The tidings to our kindred shore ;
 The triumph-tidings pealing from that land,
 Where up in arms insulted legions stand ;
 There, gathering round his bold compeers,
 Where He, our own, our welcomed One,
 Riper in glory than in years,
 Down from his forfeit throne,
 A craven monarch hurled,
 And spurned him forth, a proverb to the world !

XIV.

We call them savage—O be just !
 Their outraged feelings scan ;
 A voice comes forth, 'tis from the dust—
 The savage was a man !
 Think ye he loved not ? who stood by,
 And in his toils took part ?
 Woman was there to bless his eye—
 The savage had a heart !
 Think ye he prayed not ? when on high
 He heard the thunders roll,
 What bade him look beyond the sky ?
 The savage had a soul !

XV.

I venerate the Pilgrim's cause,
 Yet for the red man dare to plead—
 We bow to Heaven's recorded laws,
 He turned to nature for a creed ;
 Beneath the pillared dome,
 We seek our God in prayer ;
 Through boundless woods he loved to roam,
 And the Great Spirit worshipped there :
 But one, one fellow-throb with us he felt ;
 To one divinity with us he knelt ;
 Freedom, the self-same freedom we adore,
 Bade him defend his violated shore ;
 He saw the cloud, ordained to grow,
 And burst upon his hills in wo ,
 He saw his people withering by,
 Beneath the invader's evil eye ;
 Strange feet were trampling on his fathers' bones ;
 At midnight hour he woke to gaze
 Upon his happy cabin's blaze,
 And listen to his children's dying groans :
 He saw—and maddening at the sight,
 Gave his bold bosom to the fight ;
 To tiger rage his soul was driven,
 Mercy was not—nor sought nor given ;
 The pale man from his lands must fly ;
 He would be free—or he would die.

XVI.

And was this savage ? say,
 Ye ancient few,
 Who struggled through
 Young freedom's trial-day—
 What first your sleeping wrath awoke ?
 On your own shores war's larum broke :
 What turned to gall even kindred blood ?
 Round your own homes the oppressor stood :
 This every warm affection chilled,
 This every heart with vengeance thrilled,
 And strengthened every hand ;
 From mound to mound,
 The word went round—
 “ Death for our native land !”

XVII.

Ye mothers, too, breathe ye no sigh,
 For them who thus could dare to die ?
 Are all your own dark hours forgot,
 Of soul-sick suffering here ?
 Your pangs, as from yon mountain spot,
 Death spoke in every booming shot,
 That knelled upon your ear ?
 How oft that gloomy, glorious tale ye tell,
 As round your knees your children's children hang,
 Of them, the gallant Ones, ye loved so well,
 Who to the conflict for their country sprang.

In pride, in all the pride of wo,
 Ye tell of them, the brave laid low,
 Who for their birthplace bled ;
 In pride, the pride of triumph then,
 Ye tell of them, the matchless men,
 From whom the invaders fled !

XVIII.

And ye, this holy place who throng,
 The annual theme to hear,
 And bid the exulting song
 Sound their great names from year to year ;
 Ye, who invoke the chisel's breathing grace,
 In marble majesty their forms to trace ;
 Ye, who the sleeping rocks would raise,
 To guard their dust and speak their praise ;
 Ye, who, should some other band
 With hostile foot defile the land,
 Feel that ye like them would wake,
 Like them the yoke of bondage break,
 Nor leave a battle-blade undrawn,
 Though every hill a sepulchre should yawn—
 Say, have not ye one line for those,
 One brother-line to spare,
 Who rose but as your Fathers rose,
 And dared as ye would dare ?

XIX.

Alas ! for them—their day is o'er,
 Their fires are out from hill and shore ,

No more for them the wild deer bounds,
 The plough is on their hunting grounds ;
 The pale man's axe rings through their
 woods,
 The pale man's sail skims o'er their floods,
 Their pleasant springs are dry ;
 Their children—look, by power oppressed,
 Beyond the mountains of the west,
 Their children go—to die.

XX.

O doubly lost ! oblivion's shadows close
 Around their triumphs and their woes.
 On other realms, whose suns have set,
 Reflected radiance lingers yet ;
 There sage and bard have shed a light
 That never shall go down in night ;
 There time-crowned columns stand on high,
 To tell of them who cannot die ;
 Even we, who then were nothing, kneel
 In homage there, and join earth's general peal.
 But the doomed Indian leaves behind no trace,
 To save his own, or serve another race ;
 With his frail breath his power has passed away,
 His deeds, his thoughts are buried with his clay ;
 Nor lofty pile, nor glowing page
 Shall link him to a future age,
 Or give him with the past a rank :
 His heraldry is but a broken bow,
 His history but a tale of wrong and wo,
 His very name must be a blank.

XXI.

Cold, with the beast he slew, he sleeps ;
 O'er him no filial spirit weeps ;
 No crowds throng round, no anthem-notes ascend,
 To bless his coming and embalm his end ;
 Even that he lived, is for his conqueror's tongue,
 By foes alone his death-song must be sung ;
 No chronicles but theirs shall tell
 His mournful doom to future times ;
 May these upon his virtues dwell,
 And in his fate forget his crimes.

XXII.

Peace to the mingling dead !
 Beneath the turf we tread,
 Chief, Pilgrim, Patriot sleep—
 All gone ! how changed ! and yet the same,
 As when faith's herald bark first came
 In sorrow o'er the deep.
 Still from his noonday height,
 The sun looks down in light ;
 Along the trackless realms of space,
 The stars still run their midnight race ;
 The same green valleys smile, the same rough
 shore
 Still echoes to the same wild ocean's roar :—
 But where the bristling night-wolf sprang
 Upon his startled prey,
 Where the fierce Indian's war-cry rang,
 Through many a bloody fray ;

And where the stern old Pilgrim prayed
 In solitude and gloom,
 Where the bold Patriot drew his blade,
 And dared a patriot's doom—
 Behold ! in liberty's unclouded blaze,
 We lift our heads, a race of other days.

XXIII.

All gone ! the wild beast's lair is trodden out ;
 Proud temples stand in beauty there ;
 Our children raise their merry shout,
 Where once the death-whoop vexed the air :
 The Pilgrim—seek yon ancient place of graves,
 Beneath that chapel's holy shade ;
 Ask, where the breeze the long grass waves,
 Who, who within that spot are laid :
 The Patriot—go, to fame's proud mount repair,
 The tardy pile, slow rising there,
 With tongueless eloquence shall tell
 Of them who for their country fell.

XXIV.

All gone ! 'tis ours, the goodly land—
 Look round—the heritage behold ;
 Go forth—upon the mountains stand,
 Then, if ye can, be cold.
 See living vales by living waters blessed,
 Their wealth see earth's dark caverns yield,
 See ocean roll, in glory dressed,

For all a treasure, and round all a shield :
 Hark to the shouts of praise
 Rejoicing millions raise ;
 Gaze on the spires that rise,
 To point them to the skies,
 Unfearing and unfear'd ;
 Then, if ye can, O then forget
 To whom ye owe the sacred debt—
 The Pilgrim race revered !
 The men who set faith's burning lights
 Upon these everlasting heights,
 To guide their children through the years of time ;
 The men that glorious law who taught,
 Unshrinking liberty of thought,
 And roused the nations with the truth sublime.

XXV.

Forget ? no, never—ne'er shall die,
 Those names to memory dear ;
 I read the promise in each eye
 That beams upon me here.
 Descendants of a twice-recorded race,
 Long may ye here your lofty lineage grace ;
 'Tis not for you home's tender tie
 To rend, and brave the waste of waves ;
 'Tis not for you to rouse and die,
 Or yield and live a line of slaves ;
 The deeds of danger and of death are done :
 Upheld by inward power alone,
 Unhonoured by the world's loud tongue,

'Tis yours to do unknown,
 And then to die unsung.
 To other days, to other men belong
 The penman's plaudit and the poet's song ;
 Enough for glory has been wrought,
 By you be humbler praises sought ;
 In peace and truth life's journey run,
 And keep unsullied what your Fathers won.

XXVI.

Take then my prayer, Ye dwellers of this spot—
 Be yours a noiseless and a guiltless lot.

I plead not that ye bask
 In the rank beams of vulgar fame ;
 To light your steps I ask
 A purer and a holier flame.
 No bloated growth I supplicate for you,
 No pining multitude, no pampered few ;
 'Tis not alone to coffer gold,
 Nor spreading borders to behold ;
 'Tis not fast-swelling crowds to win,
 The refuse-ranks of want and sin—
 This be the kind decree :
 Be ye by goodness crowned,
 Revered, though not renowned ;
 Poor, if Heaven will, but Free !
 Free from the tyrants of the hour,
 The clans of wealth, the clans of power,
 The coarse, cold scorners of their God ;

Free from the taint of sin,
 The leprosy that feeds within,
 And free, in mercy, from the bigot's rod.

XXVII.

The sceptre's might, the crosier's pride,
 Ye do not fear ;
 No conquest blade, in life-blood dyed,
 Drops terror here—
 Let there not lurk a subtler snare,
 For wisdom's footsteps to beware ;
 The shackle and the stake,
 Our Fathers fled ;
 Ne'er may their children wake
 A fouler wrath, a deeper dread ;
 Ne'er may the craft that fears the flesh to bind,
 Lock its hard fetters on the mind ;
 Quenched be the fiercer flame
 That kindles with a name ;
 The pilgrim's faith, the pilgrim's zeal,
 Let more than pilgrim kindness seal ;
 Be purity of life the test,
 Leave to the heart, to Heaven, the rest.

XXVIII.

So, when our children turn the page,
 To ask what triumphs marked our age,
 What we achieved to challenge praise,
 Through the long line of future days,

This let them read, and hence instruction draw :

“ Here were the Many blessed,
 “ Here found the virtues rest,
 “ Faith linked with love and liberty with law ;
 “ Here industry to comfort led,
 “ Her book of light here learning spread ;
 “ Here the warm heart of youth
 “ Was wooed to temperance and to truth ;
 “ Here hoary age was found,
 “ By wisdom and by reverence crowned.
 “ No great, but guilty fame
 “ Here kindled pride, that should have kindled
 shame ;
 “ THESE chose the better, happier part,
 “ That poured its sunlight o'er the heart ;
 “ That crowned their homes with peace and
 health,
 “ And weighed Heaven's smile beyond earth's
 wealth ;
 “ Far from the thorny paths of life
 “ They stood, a living lesson to their race,
 “ Rich in the charities of life,
 “ Man in his strength, and Woman in her grace ;
 “ In purity and love THEIR pilgrim road they trod,
 “ And when they served their neighbor felt they
 served their God.”

XXIX.

This may not wake the poet's verse,
 This souls of fire may ne'er rehearse
 In crowd-delighting voice ;

Yet o'er the record shall the patriot bend,
 His quiet praise the moralist shall lend,
 And all the good rejoice.

XXX.

This be our story then, in that far day,
 When others come their kindred debt to pay :
 In that far day ?—O what shall be,
 In this dominion of the free,
 When we and ours have rendered up our trust,
 And men unborn shall tread above our dust ?
 O what shall be ?—He, He alone,
 The dread response can make,
 Who sitteth on the only throne,
 That time shall never shake ;
 Before whose all-beholding eyes
 Ages sweep on, and empires sink and rise.
 Then let the song to Him begun,
 To Him in reverence end :
 Look down in love, Eternal One,
 And Thy good cause defend ;
 Here, late and long, put forth Thy hand,
 To guard and guide the Pilgrim's land.



